

September 10, 2002

Chairman Powell and Commissioners:

I have reviewed the many filings in this proceeding, and have discovered, to my great dismay, that while there are a large number of filings by attorneys the voice of the people is almost completely absent. While I despair of being heeded due to the political nature of this proceeding, I feel compelled to speak out and hope that the Commission will seriously consider the following comments before it makes a grave mistake.

As a resident and owner of a small business in Laramie, Wyoming (Wyoming being one of the states under consideration in this proceeding), I can report that Qwest has utterly foreclosed any and all competitive telecommunications services in our community and in fact in most of our state. It is difficult even to discover that any option other than Qwest exists, and the supposedly "competitive" providers that do offer service in this area cannot, due to Qwest's anti-competitive practices, actually offer a competitive price or competitive services.

Wyoming's Public Service Commission consists of political appointees who will do nothing to limit Qwest's anti-competitive conduct. And even if it had the will to do so, its powers have been so reduced by recent legislation that it cannot so much as lift a finger to aid citizens who desire other options than Qwest's monopoly service. To live or do business in Laramie is to be utterly at the mercy of Qwest. Qwest's dominance is so great and its political and economic power so unfettered that I fear retaliation for commenting on this issue, but believe that I must do so lest the situation become still worse.

I challenge the Commission to perform the following test. Send a Commission staff member to Laramie, Wyoming, and ask him or her to attempt to locate, get a quote for, and obtain competitive telephone service for a business (in particular, one like ours which takes mostly incoming calls with orders from customers). He or she will quickly discover that Qwest's "competitors" cannot offer comparable service at the same price, or offer any bundle of services at a lower price. He or she may also wish to drive along US Highway 287 and observe the fiber optic cable which McLeodUSA laid from Laramie to neighboring Colorado. This cable, originally slated to provide competitive communications services, was abandoned by McLeodUSA due to an anti-competitive agreement with Qwest whose terms have remained secret. This same agreement has prevented McLeodUSA from providing timely and accurate information to Wyoming's Public Service Commission during its 271 proceedings, thus rendering the record incomplete and presenting a misleading picture of the situation in the state.

I do not expect the Commission to rely solely on my words here, but do strongly believe that it should undertake an investigation whose results will be unsullied by the political bias of our

state's Public Service Commission and unclouded by secret agreements between Qwest and other carriers. The Commission would be remiss if it did not investigate the true situation before granting approval to Qwest to provide intraLATA transport under Section 271 of the 1996 Telecommunications Act.

Sincerely,

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